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THE RULES.

(With apologies to EDGAR ALLAN POE)

I.

Life is now beset with rules—
Irksome rules
That are framed by different bureaucratic legislative schools.
How they mind us and they bind us
In this regulative age,
How they irritate and grind us
Till it's possible to find us
In an unrestricted rage ;
And we curse, curse, curse,
As our wrath grows worse and worse,
At the fiendish machinations of the regulative fools,
With their rules, rules, rules, rules,
Rules, rules, rules—
With their overtaxing, unrelaxing rules !

II.

Then those "good old-fashioned rules,"
Golden rules !
How successfully they've gulled the minds of myriads of fools !
Throughout the many ages,
Tricked by prophets, priests, and sages,
The people have decided
By the rules ;
Though some have not abided,
But have risen and derided
All the rules :
Yet the patient, willing mules,
Continually chloroformed in churches and in schools,
Still are fools,
And are tools
Of the syndicates and pools,
Of the money-grubbing ghouls,
Whose knavery a slavery
Has fashioned from the rules—
Yes, the rules, rules, rules, rules,
Rules, rules, rules—
The blind-enslaving, mind-depraving rules ?

III.

But the last-planned loathsome rules—
 Brazen rules!

What fearsome propositions from the modern legal schools!

 By their all-invading might
 (With its all-pervading blight)

 They who never cease to bleed us
 Would control the means to breed us,
 Through the Law!

In their frantic adoration of the majesty of Law,
In their mad infatuation with the sordid strumpet Law,

 They would swamp us in the mire
 Of their rule-enforcing ire :

 They would pile laws higher, higher,
 In their desperate desire

 To lead us all through life by Law!

 Oh, the rules, rules, rules,
 That the grim Eugenic ghouls
 Would enact!

 The latest wild distortion
 Of mind is that abortion,

The abominable "Feeble-Minded Act";

 And the motive clearly shows:

 For restraining
 And detaining

And sequestering all those

 Whom the parasites terms fools,
They're erecting
 And perfecting

 Yet another of their tools

For coercing all who dare to bid defiance to the rules,
 To the rules, rules, rules,

 Rules, rules, rules—

To those handicapping, overlapping, fit-for-scraping
 Rules.

P. E. TANNER.

FREEDOM.

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

(Established 1886.)

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Aug/14